

PROWD Staffing RFP Q&A

1. For re-entry participants, will drug screens and background checks be required? If so, can we bill SMPDD for the cost?

Pre-hire testing is contingent on employer requirements. SMPDD can be billed.

2. For skilled trades, will specific screenings be required (Ex. Respirator fit testing, hair follicle drug testing, physicals etc.) If these are a possibility, can we bill SMPDD for the cost?

Pre-hire testing is contingent on employer requirements. SMPDD can be billed.

3. Will stipends be part of the contract as the responsibility of the payroll provider?

No.

4. What are the maximum weekly hours participants will be working?

No more than 8 hours a day for a maximum total of 40 hours per week. We feel this would be seasonal/temporary employment. No overtime is allowed.

5. What are the maximum hours expected to work for the completion of their internship?

Approximately 320 hours per participant.

6. I see there are 3 funding streams in the RFP with budgets totaling \$5,713,006.31. Is this the estimated budget for the first year of payroll for work experience internships? If not, what is the approximate budget for the first year of payroll?

No, that is the total grant award amount. \$439,520 is allocated for work-based learning initiatives over the next 2 (two) years.

7. Would you like 3 different rate sheets per grant or 1?

One rate sheet for the proposal.

8. Will you require us to provide full health, vision and dental insurance to the people we payroll?

No.

9. Will you require PTO and sick day pay?

No. Participants are only allowed to be paid for hours worked.

10. Can you confirm your policy for holidays and can you provide a list of the current holidays your organization recognizes?

Participants are only allowed to be paid for hours worked. (no overtime or holiday pay)

11. Do you have a target number of people you anticipate payrolling?

Approximately 50, no more than 125.

12. Do you have an average length of time you foresee each person needing to be payrolled?

Approximately 320 hours.

13. Is there a current incumbent providing these services for you currently?

No.

14. Please confirm if this is a new initiative or a re-bid of an existing contract?

New initiative.

15. Are there any specific challenges, pain points or areas of concern that you are currently experiencing with the existing vendors?

N/A

16. Please clarify the anticipated number of awards expected under this RFP.

Minimum of one, possibly more.

17. Is there a local preference in connection with this RFP?

No, but proposer must have the ability to service target clientele in the service area.

18. Could you please confirm the list of roles or job titles that fall under the Non-Skilled Trade and Skilled Trade categories?

The participants will be placed in occupations of interest or necessary for career pathway advancement. We are unable to predict which roles or job titles participants will be placed.

19. Please confirm the evaluation criteria and weighting (e.g., technical vs. cost).

Ability to service clientele/service area, cost/price, and demonstrated ability/past performance are weighted evenly.

20. Will there be an opportunity for an oral presentation or negotiation meeting during the evaluation process?

No.

21. What is the expected timeline for award notification and contract execution?

Refer to Page 8 of the RFP.

22. What is the anticipated volume of staffing requests (e.g., estimated number of requisitions per year)?

Approximately 50 requests.

23. Could you please provide details on the job categories, labor classifications or skill sets most requested?

Unable to determine at this time. TDWDA Priority Sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics, Energy & Chemical, Healthcare, and Information Technology, but positions are not limited to this list.

24. Is there an employee conversion policy (i.e., can the department directly hire contractor staff after a defined period)?

No.

25. Will timekeeping be handled through the department's system or will vendors be required to provide a platform?

Vendors will be required to provide a platform.

26. In the event of a contract award, please clarify whether awarded vendors will be permitted to directly engage with individual departments/agencies for staffing requests or if all requirements will be routed through a centralized system?

Staffing requests will be referred through SMPDD.

27. What is the tentative start date of this engagement?

Refer to Page 8 of the RFP.

28. What is the work location of the proposed candidates?

Refer to Page 4 of the RFP.

29. Is there any mandatory subcontracting requirement for this contract? If yes, Is there any specific goal for the subcontracting?

No.

30. If the resources we provide at the time of proposal submission are not available at the time of a potential contract award could vendors replace them with equally qualified resources?

The vendor must have the ability, capacity, skill and financial resources to perform the service required upon proposal submission.

31. Can we provide hourly rate ranges in the price proposal?

Flat-fee hourly billing rate *must be* provided. Refer to Pages 11 & 12 of the RFP.

32. Will the County allow **mid-contract price adjustments** (e.g., for agency fees or wage rates) during the three-year term, and if so, under what conditions?

No. The initial contract will only be for one (1) year, with the option to extend annually for up to three (3) years. Only during the negotiation of the extension will price adjustments be considered.

33. If adjustments are permitted, is there a **specified mechanism** (e.g., annual review, CPI-based increase, or mutual negotiation) that governs such changes?

N/A

34. Should the initial proposal reflect **fixed pricing for the entire term**, or can adjustments be proposed in advance as part of the contract?

Fixed pricing for the entire one (1) year term.

35. Is it entirely onsite work or can it be done remotely to some extent / Does the services need to be delivered onsite or is there a possibility for remote operations and performance?

The work based learning must be performed onsite. The selected vendor does not have to operate onsite.

36. Are resumes required at the time of proposal submission? If yes, Do we need to submit the actual resumes for proposed candidates or can we submit the sample resumes?

Actual resumes are not required. However, the "Management Plan" requirements on Page 11 of the RFP must be followed.

37. Do we also need to submit a hard copy if we are submitting the proposal by email?

No.

38. Are there any mandatory subcontracting goals?

No.

39. Is it a single award contract?

One or more vendors may be chosen.

40. Could you clarify whether this solicitation is exclusively for Minority and Woman-Owned Business Enterprises, or if M/WBE firms are simply encouraged without restricting eligibility?

Encouraged without restricting eligibility.

41. Is a local or physical office in the State of Mississippi required to submit a proposal, or may out-of-state vendors participate as long as all service requirements are met?

No, a local or physical office is not required, but proposer must have the ability to service target clientele in the service area.

42. Are any Mississippi business licenses, tax registrations, or certificates required at the time of proposal submission, or only upon award?

Upon award.

43. Is a sample Certificate of Insurance (COI) required with the proposal, or will proof of insurance be requested only from the awarded vendor?

Only from the awarded vendor.

44. Could you please confirm the required insurance limits for this contract, including General Liability, Workers' Compensation, Professional Liability, Cyber Liability, and Auto Liability?

As the Employer of Record, the required insurance limits are the responsibility of the vendor.

45. Can you confirm that the vendor's responsibility is strictly limited to payroll services—such as E-Verify, payroll processing, tax withholdings, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, garnishments, W-2s, invoicing, and audit support—and does not include sourcing, supervising, or managing participants?

Strictly limited to payroll services.

46. The RFP mentions cost reimbursement and a flat-fee billing structure. Could you clarify whether reimbursement is per participant, per payroll cycle, or based on a monthly flat administrative fee?

Refer to Page 8 of the RFP.

47. Will the vendor be required to front payroll funds and later be reimbursed by SMPDD, or will SMPDD pre-fund wages before payroll is processed?

The vendor will be required to front payroll funds to later be reimbursed. Refer to Page 6 & 8 of the RFP.

48. Will SMPDD provide expected participant counts by county or region to help estimate payroll volume?

The majority of the initial participant enrollments will be centered in the Hattiesburg, MS, and surrounding area. This could change as the programs are implemented.

49. Are vendors permitted to charge separate fees for background checks, drug tests, or other pre-employment screenings?

Additional fees may be billed for agreed upon pre-hire services. Refer to Page 8 of the RFP.

50. Will the awarded vendor be required to hire and employ participants directly as W-2 employees, or is the use of an Employer of Record (EOR) subcontractor acceptable?

The awarded vendor is expected to hire and employ participants directly. Any use of a subcontractor must receive prior approval from SMPDD.

51. Could you clarify whether the vendor may assign a dedicated employee to perform the payroll services, or whether SMPDD requires the payroll service to be carried out strictly by the firm (corporate-level service)?

The awarded vendor is expected to perform all services as outlined in the RFP.